



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Criminal Justice Services

Garth L. Wheeler
Director

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July 19, 2013

Dear Pretrial Services and Local Probation Professionals:

Governor McDonnell has declared July 21-27, 2013 to be Pretrial, Probation and Parole Supervision Week in Virginia to recognize the contributions of community corrections professionals to our Commonwealth. I want to take this opportunity to thank you and acknowledge your valuable work as local probation and pretrial officers.

You are a critical link in Virginia's public safety system. You provide the courts with recommendations and supervision based on the best research, using validated risk assessments. Your challenges include testing offenders for substance abuse, placing them in community service, monitoring compliance with domestic violence interventions, and providing extensive referrals for drug treatment, mental health services, housing and employment.

One of our many responsibilities at DCJS is providing support for localities to operate local probation and pretrial services. Your local agencies have an excellent record of providing courts with evidence-based alternatives to incarceration, holding offenders accountable at a fraction of the cost of incarceration in local jails. Today in Virginia there are over 25,000 adults under supervision of local probation or pretrial services officers as a condition of their sentence or while awaiting trial.

Your hard work helps generate better use of criminal justice resources, successful compliance for defendants and offenders, and improved outcomes for victims and taxpayers. Though faced with tight budgets and additional responsibilities, you are improving lives through professional dedication, working smarter and collaborating with other agencies. Congratulations on making a positive difference in Virginia, and thank you for making our communities a safer place to live.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Garth L. Wheeler".

Garth L. Wheeler